**CALL FOR CONCEPT NOTES**

**Programme:** African Community Access Programme (AFCAP)

**Funding:** UK Department for International Development (DFID)

**Programme Manager:** Crown Agents

**Call for Concept Notes:**

AFCAP plans to commission a small number of research papers pertaining to significant knowledge gaps in rural transport and, in particular, Transport Services in sub-Saharan Africa. Therefore, it is now inviting project proposals from individuals, non-governmental organisations, firms, universities and similar organisations with experience in this area. Applicants must use the format attached. Only one form should be used for each project concept. However, an Applicant may submit more than one project concept for consideration up to a maximum of three.

The studies may incorporate not only desk-based research, reviewing and reflecting on findings from published and grey literature, but also a small component of field research. Topics on which individual Concept Notes are invited are as follows:

* ***Linkages between transport, environment and climate change in Africa:***i.e. the potential impact of linkages between transport, environment and climate change on rural populations in sub-Saharan Africa in terms of risk, vulnerability and resilience; any potential transport-related interventions which may be needed for pro-poor climate change mitigation, adaptation to progressive climate change and managing climate risk. An inter-disciplinary study is required which focuses on the complexity of transport impacts and draws on expertise from various disciplines (e.g. road engineering, socio-economics, climate science, agriculture/food security).
* ***A review of methodological issues in applying transport economics in African contexts:*** The poor fit of standard transport economics approaches to African contexts currently presents a major hurdle in economic analyses. There are major unresolved issues for instance in assessing rates of return from transport developments in health, education and agriculture and the complementarities associated with social benefits: standard techniques used in Western contexts are not easily applicable. We are looking for a small economics-based desk study to support the development of a set of Africa-adapted measurement techniques.
* ***The role of transport and transport services in fragile and conflict-affected societies and states:***  i.e., the means by which improved transport and transport services can help to rebuild economies in post-conflict countries and lessen vulnerability to future conflict.
* ***The current and potential impact of Chinese and other emerging powers on African transport contexts,***  including consideration of both transport infrastructure and transport services issues.
* ***The role of transport operator associations in shaping Transport Services in Africa’s rural areas.*** The majority of research on transport operators has been conducted in urban settings: we are looking for a review, possibly coupled with small field studies, regarding their role in rural areas in route designation, fare setting, timetabling, training, road safety and driver/passenger interactions with police and other relevant actors.
* ***Reasons behind the failure of transport planning to substantially improve women’s access to facilities and services*** i.e. desk review plus focused small field study of the African transport policy and practitioner environment, to identify where and why information does not translate adequately into action and possible means to rectify this.

The commissioned studies may subsequently help form the base for larger field projects into Transport Services in sub-Saharan Africa, but any follow-up projects would be separately commissioned and would need to comply with AFCAP’s four way test for project proposals:

* + 1. Does the project have strong local ownership?
		2. Does the project include mainly research, knowledge dissemination or training?
		3. Will the project contribute to sustainable improvements to rural transport?
		4. Will the project contribute to building national or regional capacity?

**Criteria for selection :** The criteria for selection and prioritisation of project concepts will be:

1. Relevance to AFCAP’s overall goal of providing reliable access for poor communities in Africa;
2. Contribution to knowledge and research in the area of rural transport services in sub-Saharan Africa through the provision of careful reviews of published and grey literature and associated small field studies where appropriate.
3. Relevance to the topics outlined above.

**Background :** In addition to the information below, all potential proposers are encouraged to visit the AFCAP website at https://www.afcap.org.

The Africa Community Access Programme (AFCAP) is designed to address the challenges of providing reliable access for poor communities in Africa. Funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) AFCAP provides advice and funds applied research to rural access problems, communicates the research outcomes to stakeholders, and supports the mainstreaming of the research results into practice.

The goal of AFCAP is sustained economic and social development, poverty reduction and improved livelihoods of the rural poor through more effective, efficient and equitable access to socio-economic opportunities. The purpose of AFCAP is to create sustainable access for rural communities to external opportunities and services including health, education, employment, markets and social and political networks. Therefore, to achieve the programme goal and purpose, AFCAP has a vision of delivering an integrated, wide-ranging portfolio of research, dissemination and training activities. The implementation phase of AFCAP commenced in June 2008 and the programme is scheduled to run until 2014. The management of AFCAP has been contracted by DFID to the Crown Agents.

**Duration (of project):** maximum 4 months.

**Indicative Budget:** £30,000 per Concept Note

**Deadline for receipt of Concept Notes :** Monday 8th July 2013 midday BST. Please note Concept Notes may be submitted after this deadline but will not be eligible for the first round of funding.

**Application procedures:** Fill in the attached application form (see below) and provide a one-page CV of the lead applicant.

**Selection process:** After the submission deadline an initial screening and prioritisation of the received Concept Notes will be carried out. Applications successfully passing this stage will be shortlisted for further consideration. Shortlisted Applicants will be notified by email by **Monday 15th July 2013**.

The shortlisted Applicants will then be asked to submit a short project proposal (max. 2 A4 pages plus CVs) with objectives, outputs and targets together with a budget and timescale (a separate format will be provided for this). The provisional submission deadline for the concept proposal will be **Wednesday 31st July 2013.** A final selection of projects eligible for funding under the AFCAP programme will be produced and shortlisted proposal Applicants will be notified by email by **Monday 12th August 2013**, with tentative start date in **August 2013**.

**Additional information:**

***Where to submit the Concept Note*:** All applications must be submitted by email to: Ms Katie Macleod (email: katie.macleod@crownagents.co.uk or afcap@crownagents.co.uk). Subject line of the email should state: *‘Submission of Concept Note for AFCAP’.*

***Language*:** All Concept Notes must be in English.

***Further queries/questions/clarifications*:** Contact Ms Katie Macleod (email: katie.macleod@crownagents.co.uk or afcap@crownagents.co.uk).

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| **Africa Community Access Programme (AFCAP) - Project Concept Note** |
| **Name of Applicant**  |  |
| **Project Title** |  |
| **Rationale****(max 100 words)** |  |
| **Objective** |  |
| **Summary of proposed activities and outputs** |  |
| **Contribution to improved rural access** |  |
| **Contribution to capacity development** |  |
| **Estimated Duration**  | *Months* |
| **Estimated cost**  | *Give currency and express to nearest 1000 – AFCAP’s contribution only (please advise if any co-financing is available).* |
| **Risks** | *List key risks* |
| **Previous research**  | *Describe previous research (if any) on which you plan to build* |
| **Follow-up activities** | *Mention potential follow-up activities (if any)* |